

Message Text

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INFO USLO PEKING

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 PARIS 5396

NESCO

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORG, UNESCO, PRC

SUBJECT: CHINESE UNESCO SECRETARIAT MEMBER'S COMMENTS
ON M'BOW VISIT TO PRC

1. SUMMARY: HIGHLIGHTS OF COMMENTS BY CHINESE SECRETARIAT OFFICIAL WHO ACCOMPANIED NEW NESCO DIRECTOR GENERAL M'BOW ON LATE JANUARY VISIT TO PEKING CONCERNED PRELIMINARY PRC AGREEMENT TO INCREASED, BUT SELECTIVE, PARTICIPATION IN UNESCO, A PRC OFFER OF INTEREST FREE LOANS TO ORGANIZATION, IF NEEDED, AND PRC URGING OF INCREASED UNESCO PROGRAM FOCUS ON THIRD WORLD DEVELOPMENT. IMPRESSIONS OF TOP PRC OFFICIALS WERE OFFERED, AS WELL AS INFORMATION ON PRC EDUCATION-SCIENCE AGENCIES. END OF SUMMARY.

2. TIEN-CHENG YOUNG, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF UNESCO'S BUDGET BUREAU, PROVIDED DELOFF WITH INTERESTING COMMENTS ON THE VISIT OF UNESCO'S NEW DIRECTOR GENERAL, A.M. M'BOW (SENEGALESE), TO PEKING IN LATE JANUARY. YOUNG, WHO ACCOMPANIED M'BOW WAS AN ROC NATIONAL WITH UNESCO FROM
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1949 UNTIL 1972 WHEN HE ACCEPTED PRC NATIONALITY. HE

IS US EDUCATED, HAS A SON STUDYING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO, BUT HIS DAUGHTER AND WIFE RESIDE IN PEKING WHERE THE LATTER HAS BEEN RECEIVING TREATMENT IN A MENTAL INSTITUTION.

3. IN TWO RECENT LENGTHY CONVERSATIONS WITH DELOFF, YOUNG EMPHASIZED THAT THE BASIC PURPOSE OF M'BOW'S VISIT WAS TO ESTABLISH PERSONAL CONTACT WITH PRC LEADERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SERIES OF TRIPS THAT M'BOW HAS UNDERTAKEN TO JAPAN, SOVIET UNION, AND WILL SOON MAKE TO CANADA AND TO WESTERN EUROPEAN MEMBER STATES.

4. BY VIRTUE OF STATUS AS FIRST AFRICAN TO HEAD MAJOR UN AGENCY, M'BOW ACCORDED BRIEF MEETINGS WITH CHOU EN-LAI AND NEW VICE PREMIER TENG HSIAO-PING. YOUNG WAS TOLD MAO WAS AT HIS COUNTRY HOME; CONSISTENT WITH MAO'S DECISION TO WITHDRAW FROM THE PUBLIC LIMELIGHT IN AN EFFORT TO REDUCE THE CULT-LIKE ADULATION FOCUSED ON HIM. YOUNG SAID CHOU RECEIVED M'BOW AT HOSPITAL WHERE CHOU UNDERGOING EXTENSIVE DIAGNOSIS FOR WHAT WAS DESCRIBED AS A COMPLEX CARDIAC DISORDER. HOWEVER, CHOU, ACCORDING TO YOUNG, SEEMED VERY FIT AND HOSPITALIZATION WAS EXPLAINED BY DOCTORS AS ALSO BEING INTENDED TO LIMIT CHOU'S WORKLOAD. IT WAS YOUNG'S IMPRESSION THAT TENG SERVES AS CHOU'S EXECUTIVE OFFICER AND HAS EMERGED AS THE MOST POWERFUL OF TOP LEVEL PRC LEADERSHIP AS FAR AS DAILY TASKS OF GOVERNMENT ARE CONCERNED.

5. MOST OF M'BOW'S DISCUSSIONS WERE WITH THE NEW MINISTER OF EDUCATION, CHOU JUNG-HSIN AND HU SHA OF THE SAME MINISTRY. ACCORDING TO YOUNG, THE NEW MINISTRY OF EDUCATION IS IN FACT THE FORMER SCIENTIFIC AND EDUCATIONAL GROUP OF THE STATE COUNCIL WHICH WAS SIMPLY RELABELED UNDER THE NEW CONSTITUTION. CHOU HAD FORMERLY ACTED AS THE EQUIVALENT OF "EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR" OF THE CHINESE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE BUT HAS TURNED THOSE DUTIES OVER TO ANOTHER UNNAMED OFFICIAL. YOUNG WAS QUITE DEFINITE THAT THE CHINESE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE STILL EXISTS, AND CONTINUES TO FUNCTION AS A "PURELY RESEARCH-ORIENTED" BODY. HU SHA IS THE EDUCATION MINISTRY OFFICIAL

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CONFIDENTIAL DIRECTLY CHARGED WITH UNESCO AFFAIRS, ALTHOUGH HU'S POSSIBLE ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES ARE NOT KNOWN. M'BOW WAS ALSO RECEIVED BY THE "MINISTER OF CULTURE" WHOSE RESPONSIBILITIES WERE SAID TO INCLUDE YOUTH AFFAIRS AND A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICE OF UN SPECIALIZED AGENCIES WHICH IS PART OF A DIVISION FOR INTERNATIONAL TREATIES AND CONFERENCES. M'BOW ALSO VISITED TSINGHUA UNIVERSITY OF WHICH CHANG

WEI, PRC REPRESENTATIVE ON UNESCO'S EXECUTIVE BOARD,
IS "VICE-RECTOR".

6. GENERALLY SPEAKING, THE CHINESE EMPHASIZED TO M'BOW
THEIR HOPE THAT UNESCO WOULD ENLARGE ITS ALREADY

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IMPORTANT FOCUS ON THIRD WORLD DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS AND,
INDEED, STRESSED THEIR VIEW THAT M'BOW HAD A MORAL OBLI-
GATION TO THIS EFFECT AS THE SYMBOLIC REPRESENTATIVE OF
DEVELOPING COUNTRIES; A CATEGORY IN WHICH THE CHINESE
REPEATEDLY CLASSIFIED THE PRC. THE CHINESE ALSO PROMISED
TO MAKE INTEREST FREE LOANS AVAILABLE TO UNESCO IF
ASSESSED CONTRIBUTIONS OF SOME MEMBER STATES ARE WITH-
HELD OR REDUCED IN RETALIATION FOR ANTI-ISRAELI RESOLU-
TIONS ADOPTED AT THE UNESCO GENERAL CONFERENCE LAST FALL.

7. M'BOW, ACCORDING TO YOUNG, URGED GREATER PRC PARTI-
CIPATION IN UNESCO'S SECRETARIAT AND PROGRAMS. THE
CHINESE AGREED "IN PRINCIPLE", SUBJECT TO CAREFUL
FURTHER DEFINITION OF DETAILS, TO THE FOLLOWING:

(A) ACCESS TO CHINESE UNIVERSITIES OF UNESCO

FELLOWSHIP GRANTEES, PROVIDED SUCH STUDIES WERE NOT IN POLITICALLY SENSITIVE OR SECURITY-RELATED AREAS AND THAT INDIVIDUAL GRANTEES WERE OF ACCEPTABLE NATIONAL ORIGIN AS WELL AS WILLING TO OBSERVE MORAL NORMS OF CHINESE STUDENTS;
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B) MODESTLY INCREASED PRC REPRESENTATION IN UNESCO SECRETARIAT IN PARIS WHERE ONLY FIVE OF THIRTY PRC SLOTS HAVE BEEN FILLED;

(C) CONSIDERATION OF MAKING PRC PERSONNEL FOR UNESCO FIELD PROJECTS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND;

(D) PERMISSION FOR UNESCO EXPERTS TO COME TO CHINA TO STUDY THE PRC EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM AND METHODS.

7. HOWEVER, YOUNG STRESSED THAT PRC OFFICIALS WERE CAREFUL TO QUALIFY THAT THE ABOVE WERE SUBJECT TO VERY DETAILED NEGOTIATION WITH UNESCO, AND ESPECIALLY STRESSED THAT CHINA, AS A DEVELOPING COUNTRY, HAD ONLY VERY LIMITED MANPOWER TO SPARE FROM ITS DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS FOR DETACHMENT TO INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS. YOUNG TOOK THIS AS A SIGN THAT PRC INVOLVEMENT IN UNESCO, WHILE INCREASING, WOULD STILL BE KEPT AT A RELATIVELY MODEST LEVEL. PRC OFFICIALS INDICATED TO YOUNG THAT THEY WOULD NOT CREATE A NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR UNESCO. YOUNG, WHO MAY WELL HAVE BEEN ASKED FOR HIS ADVICE BY THE CHINESE, NOTED THAT EXISTING STRUCTURES ARE QUITE ADEQUATE TO HANDLE UNESCO MATTERS.

8. MOREOVER, THE CHINESE GNERALLY SHIED AWAY FROM THE SOCIAL SCIENCE AND CULTURAL PROGRAMS OF UNESCO AS WELL AS FROM UNESCO INVOLVEMENT IN THESE AREAS WITHIN THE PRC BECAUSE OF THEIR GREAT "POLITICAL" SENSITIVITY, ALTHOUGH IT WAS YOUNG'S IMPRESSION THAT NARROWLY CONFINED PROJECTS ON ART OR ARCHELOGY MIGHT BE CONSIDERED.

9. THE GNERAL ATMOSPHERE OF THE VISIT WAS A VERY CORDIAL ONE. M'BOW IMPRESSED HIS PRC HOSTS VERY FAVORABLY AS A SERIOUS, INTELLIGENT AND PRACTICAL PERSON. M'BOW, FOR HIS PART, DISPLAYED AN AVID INTEREST IN EVERYTHING FROM CUISINE TO THE TOURISTIC SIDE-TRIPS MADE. VISITS M'BOW MADE DURING HIS SIX-DAY VISIT INCLUDED THE GREAT WALL, A MINE, AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, A FACTORY, AND THE "FOUR GREEN SEASONS" COMMUNE NEAR
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PEKING. M'BOW REMARKED LATER THAT IT WAS ONLY AFTER HIS VISIT TO THE COMMUNE THAT HE PERSONALLY FELT THE PRC'S SELF DEFINITION AS A DEVELOPING COUNTRY WAS APT.

10. YOUNG SAID HE PERSONALLY ARRANGED THE SIGHTSEEING ITINERARY AND DIFFERENT MENUS FOR M'BOW AND HIS SMALL UNESCO ENTOURAGE. HE NOTED ALSO THAT ALL CONVERSATION WAS VIA INTERPRETERS, INCLUDING THE MEETING WITH CHOU-EN-LAI.

11. BY WAY OF PERSONAL BACKGROUND, IT IS NOTEWORTHY THAT YOUNG HAS BEEN TO THE PRC TWICE SINCE 1972 IN A "HOME LEAVE" CONTEXT. HOWEVER, HE SEEMS VERY MUCH TO HAVE FELT LIKE A STRANGER IN HIS OWN LAND. HIS EXPERIENCE WITH THE US AND AMERICANS DATES FROM STUDENT DAYS IN THE US DURING WORLD WAR II, FOLLOWED BY EMPLOYMENT AS A TRAINEE IN THE UNITED STATES BUREAU OF THE BUDGET, AND IS SUCH THAT HE OCCASIONALLY WILL SPEAK OF "WE" WHEN REFERRING TO AMERICANS. HE, NEVERTHELESS, SEEMS VERY IMPRESSED BY THE DISCIPLINE, INDUSTRIOUSNESS AND SEEMING ABSENCE OF CORRUPTION IN THE "NEW

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CHINA" ALTHOUGH, APART FROM HIS VALUE AS A HIGH-RANKING AND EXPERIENCED UNESCO OFFICIAL, THE COMMUNIST CHINESE HAVE SHOWN NO INTEREST IN YOUNG'S PERSONAL CONVICTIONS BEYOND REQUIRING HIM TO WEAR THE STANDARD GRAY TUNIC WHEN HE ACCOMPANIED M'BOW. INDEED, YOUNG SAID THAT PRC OFFICIALS, WHILE CORDIAL, HAVE TREATED HIM WITH CAUTION AND HAVE GENERALLY BEEN VERY EVASIVE WHENEVER HE HAS ATTEMPTED TO RAISE SUBJECTS UNRELATED TO UNESCO.

12. COMMENT: CONVERSATIONS OF DELOFFS WITH JUNIOR MEMBERS OF THE PRC PERMANENT DELEGATION HAVE CONFIRMED THAT M'BOW WAS URGED TO CONTINUE AND EXPAND UNESCO'S DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS AS WELL AS THE PRC OFFICIALS CONCERNED IN AND THE GENERAL ITINERARY OF M'BOW'S VISIT. HOWEVER, PRC DELOFFS ASSERTED THEY DID NOT YET HAVE THE "DETAILS" OF PRC DISCUSSIONS WITH M'BOW. IN SUM, YOUNG'S INFORMATION ABOVE, CONVERSATIONS WITH THE PRC PERMDEL AND PRC ACTIONS IN UNESCO SUGGEST THAT PRC WILL EXPAND AT A STEADY BUT SLOW PACE ITS PRESENCE IN UNESCO ACTIVITIES. THE APPARENT PRIMARY PRC INTEREST

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CONTINUES TO BE IN UNESCO'S SCIENCE ACTIVITIES AND MORE GENERALLY IN UNESCO AS A RELATIVELY NEUTRAL MEETING GROUND FOR THE EXCHANGE AND ESPECIALLY THE OBTAINING OF INFORMATION FROM OTHER MEMBER STATES. IN MARKED CONTRAST TO THE SOVIETS, THE CHINESE HAVE GENERALLY REFRAINED FROM SYSTEMATIC EFFORTS TO EXPLOIT UNESCO FOR PROPAGANDISTIC PURPOSES.

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